

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1-36 (Cancelled)

37. (Currently amended) An apparatus for policing transfer of packets, each said packet belonging to one of a plurality of traffic classes, said apparatus comprising:

a first policer for determining conformance of marking individual arriving first-class packets belonging to a first traffic class from among said plurality of traffic classes, which packets conform according to a first committed information rate and ~~marking each of conforming first-class packets as [[a]] conforming first-class packets;~~ and

a second policer ~~for determining conformance of~~ receiving a combination of said conforming first-class packets and arriving second-class packets belonging to a second traffic class from among said plurality of traffic classes, said second policer ~~receiving a combination of said conforming first-class packets and said arriving second-class packets and policing said combination~~ marking individual second-class packets, which second-class packets together with said conforming first-class packets conform according to a sum of said first committed information rate and a second committed information rate, as conforming second-class packets[:]]

~~wherein said second policer marks each of conforming second-class packets as a conforming second-class packet.~~

38. (Currently amended) An apparatus for policing transfer of packets, each packet

belonging to one of a plurality of traffic classes where each traffic class is allocated a respective committed information rate, said apparatus comprising:]

a cascade of policers having a one-to-one correspondence to said traffic classes, wherein

a first policer of said cascade of policers identifies conforming for identifying packets of a first traffic class from among said plurality of traffic classes, according which packets conform to a first committed information rate, as conforming packets:] and

at least one successive policer, wherein each successive policer, ~~excluding~~ said first policer, of said cascade of policers:

receives a combination of arriving packets of a corresponding traffic class and conforming packets identified by all preceding policers; and

identifies conforming packets of said corresponding traffic class based on said combination according which packets of said corresponding traffic class together with said conforming packets identified by all preceding policers, conform to a sum of committed information rates of all preceding traffic classes and a committed information rate of said corresponding traffic class.

39-46. (Cancelled)

47. (Currently amended) An apparatus for policing a plurality of traffic classes of a service, said apparatus comprising:

a first policer for marking each packets of a first traffic class from among said plurality of traffic classes, which packets collectively conform according to ~~conformance of said each packet~~ to a first pre-assigned guaranteed service rate, as conforming packets; and

a plurality of successive policers each said successive policer provided for a specific traffic class from among said plurality of traffic classes, for said each successive policer marking every packets of said specific traffic class ~~according to conformance of said every packet, which packets of said specific traffic class~~ taken in combination with other packets of said specific traffic class and certain packets of preceding traffic classes ~~[[.]] marked as conforming packets conform~~ to an aggregate service rate, as conforming packets of said specific traffic class.

48. (Currently amended) The apparatus of claim 47 wherein said aggregate service rate equals a sum of guaranteed service rates of said specific traffic class and each pre-assigned to one of said preceding traffic classes, including said first pre-assigned guaranteed service rate.

49. (Previously presented) The apparatus of claim 48 further comprising a leaky-bucket mechanism associated with said first policer and a leaky-bucket mechanism associated with each of said successive policers.

50. (Currently amended) The apparatus of claim 49 wherein said conformance marking of said each packets of said first traffic class is determined performed by means of said leaky-bucket mechanism associated with said first policer and said conformance marking of said every packets of said specific traffic class is determined performed by means of said leaky-bucket mechanism associated with said each of said successive policers.

51. (Cancelled)

52. (Currently amended) An apparatus for policing packets of a plurality of traffic classes of a service, said traffic classes arranged in a predetermined order, said apparatus comprising[:]

~~a plurality of policers having a one-to-one correspondence to said traffic classes;~~

~~a first policer of said plurality of policers being assigned a policer service rate equal to a pre-assigned service rate of a first traffic class of said plurality of traffic classes[.]][:]~~ and

a plurality of succeeding policers each succeeding policer allocated to a corresponding traffic class and assigned a respective policer service rate determined as a sum of a pre-assigned service rate of ~~[[a]]~~ said corresponding traffic class and a policer service rate of an immediately preceding policer, wherein:

~~said first policer polices traffic comprising all~~ marks packets of said first traffic class, ~~which packets conform to said pre-assigned service rate of said first traffic class,~~ to produce an output of said first policer comprising ~~at least one conforming packets~~ marked as conforming packets; and

~~said each succeeding policer polices aggregate traffic comprising all packets of said corresponding traffic class and conforming packets at output of said preceding policer to produce an output of said each succeeding policer comprising conforming packets~~

marks packets of said corresponding traffic class, which packets together with packets marked as conforming packets at outputs of all preceding policers including said first policer conform to said respective policer service rate, to produce an output of said each succeeding policer comprising packets marked as conforming packets.

53. (Currently amended) The apparatus of claim 52 wherein said output of said first policer and said output of said each succeeding policer include[[s]] nonconforming packets marked accordingly as nonconforming packets.